Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Cleveland State University
Applied Quantitative Reasoning II
UST/PAD/PDD 602

Syllabus

Fall Semester 2006
Tuesday 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Room: UR 309

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Office Hours: By appointment

Description:
UST 602 covers the logic of empirical inquiry and the design of research to solve specific urban problems. Among the topics covered are experimental designs, measurement, validity, reliability, survey design and analysis, performance measurement, program evaluation, and the ethics of the research process. Students develop an executable research design as a product of the course.

Purpose:
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the logic of empirical inquiry in urban studies, planning and public administration.

Goal:
The goal of this course is to make students educated consumers of information by providing them with knowledge of research issues and procedures, allowing them to assess the quality of research conducted by others and to independently conduct research of practical problems in the areas of urban studies, planning or public administration.

Objectives:

As an active participant in this course, you will:

- Demonstrate an ability to critique the research methodology of published research;
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of research issues, methodologies, threats to validity, surveys, measurement, as well as data availability and fit
- Demonstrate an ability to design research on a real world program or policy

Required Texts:

Jarol B. Manheim & Richard C. Rich, *Empirical Political Analysis: Research Methods in Political Science* 6th edition Longman:2005.

Lawrence F. Locke, Stephen J. Silverman & Waneen W. Spirduso, *Reading and Understanding Research* 2nd edition Sage: 1998.

Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* William Morrow: 2005.

Additional Readings:

Richard D. Bingham & Claire L. Felbinger, *Evaluation in Practice: A Methodological Approach* 2nd edition Longman:2002.

Selected articles, Economic Development Quarterly, Volume 14 Issue 1, February 2000.

Edward R. Tufte, *The Visual Display of Information* 2nd edition Graphics Press: 2001.

Additional materials as assigned.

Expectations:

1) Time Required - This course will require a significant time commitment on your part. If the general understanding is that Master's level college courses will require 2 to 3 hours of time for each credit hour of instruction, then you should anticipate spending 12 hours each week in preparation for class, homework completion and studying for exams. Some weeks will require more, some less. But this course does require a significant time commitment in order to succeed.

2) Required Skills - If you do not have experience using Excel or some other spreadsheet application, you need to make plans immediately for learning some of the basic skills required. The program tutorial is a good place to start. Numerous texts are available from the library or bookstores that provide excellent Excel training. If you do not know where to start, please ask and I will refer you to some effective resources. You should have experience using SPSS as well as understanding and interpreting output.

3) Academic Misconduct – Academic misconduct (plagiarism, cheating or in any other form) will result in a final course grade of "**F**". I encourage you to study together but each student must turn in his or her own original assignments for grading. No collaboration, sharing of resources or notes is acceptable during the taking of any exam component. If you ever have questions as to what is acceptable, please just ask.

4) Exam Scheduling – Exams for this course are scheduled in advance and dates are clearly noted in the syllabus. Make-up exams are given only in emergency cases, with proof required. If necessary we will work through the College staff to document cases of illness or legitimate emergency. Vacations are not emergencies.

Course Design:
The course will use a series of exercises, homework assignments, group projects, papers and exams to help you build skills in the application of analytical reasoning.

You should prepare for each class by reading the chapter assignments **in advance** and identifying those elements that may require additional clarification. As the course progresses understanding the discussions without having completed the readings in advance will become more difficult.

Always feel free to raise questions as a means of making sure you understand the material. Never feel that you are the only one with a question. It's rarely, if ever the case.

Grading:

Course Element	Date Due	Value
Homework #1	Sep. 26	5%
Homework #2	Oct. 17	10%
Midterm Exam	Nov. 7	15%
Literature Review	Nov. 7	15%
Group Project	Nov. 21	10%
Group Presentation	Nov. 21	5%
Final Presentation	Dec. 5	10%
Final Paper	Dec. 12	25%
Class Participation	Tuesdays	5%

- All assignments have due dates associated with them. If you must miss a class, make arrangements to submit your assignment before the scheduled meeting time for credit. Due dates of assignments not involving group components may be extended with prior approval, though penalties may be associated. Dates for group assignments usually cannot be adjusted.

- Grading of assignments is based on the accuracy of the work, the soundness of analytical thinking, effectiveness of interpretation, and the communication of results.

Attendance:
Attendance and participation at each class are expected. Discussions will provide the basis for exam material and showcase skills needed for the completion of the assignments. If you miss a class, it is **your** responsibility to obtain notes and necessary course materials from someone in class in order to complete the next assignment on time.

Special Needs:
If you require special accommodations in this course, either for homework assignments, taking exams, or to in any way be able to completely actively take part in class, please let me know as soon as possible.

Course Policies:
- Refer to the CSU Bulletin for add, drop, and withdrawal procedures.
- Please turn off ringers to all phones and pagers before class begins.
- Elements of the course schedule are subject to change, with notice, if circumstances in the course warrant.

Course Elements:

1) Homework #1 – Each student will write a one page review of an article provided in class. The Locke et. al. Form 5.1 will be completed for the article. (1 page)

2) Homework #2 – Each student will select five research articles on one specific subject that interests the student and will write a one page review of each of the articles. The Locke et. al. Form 5.1 should be completed for each article. Forms and articles should be submitted with the written reviews. This assignment serves as a foundation for the literature review. (5 pages)

3) Midterm Exam – This exam will assess each student's ability to explain the concepts discussed in class as well to effectively read, understand and communicate journal research.

4) Literature Review – Each student will expand upon the work done in the second homework assignment by writing a comprehensive literature review of the approved subject. Copies of all articles and Locke et. al. Form 5.1s should be included with the submission. (5-10 pages)

5) Group Project – Students will be assigned to small groups. Each group will be presented with an evaluation research problem and will be expected to develop a research design to effectively evaluate the program. The final work product will be a written proposal describing the intended evaluation design. (10-15 pages)

6) Group Presentation – Each group will present its group project to the class. The presentation should include a brief topic overview, a statement of the problem, a review of the relevant literature, the intended methodology and data issues. Each group will be allowed 30 minutes to present to the class. One hard copy of the deck should be turned in prior to the presentation.

7) Final Presentation – Each student will have 15 minutes to present a summary of their final paper to the class. The presentation should include a topic overview, a summary of the relevant literature, the intended methodology and data issues. A hard copy of the deck should be turned in prior to the presentation.

8) Final Paper – This assignment builds upon the literature review completed earlier in the semester. Each student will write a complete research proposal. The project should include all elements dealt with in the course. Actual data analysis is not required. (10-15 pages)

Course Schedule:

Aug. 29	Introduction to Course Statistics review
Sep. 5	Statistics Review Manheim & Rich 1-3
Sep. 12	Class cancelled
Sep. 19	Guest: Bill Barrow Locke 1-5 Moore, et.al. article
Sep. 26	Locke 6- 8 Manheim & Rich 1-7 **Homework #1 DUE**
Oct. 3	Manheim & Rich 8-12
Oct. 10	Manheim & Rich 13- 15 Tufte Style Guides
Oct. 17	Guest: Jim Robey Manheim & Rich 16-18 **Homework #2 DUE**
Oct. 24	Guest: Pat Cirillo Manheim & Rich 19-21 Bingham & Felbinger
Oct. 31	Guest: Rob Stuart Manheim & Rich 22-23 Bingham & Felbinger
Nov. 7	**Midterm Exam** **Literature Review DUE**
Nov 14	Freakonomics
Nov. 21	**Group Presentations** **Group Project DUE**
Nov. 28	Freakonomics
Dec. 5	**Final Presentations**
Dec. 12	**Final Papers DUE**